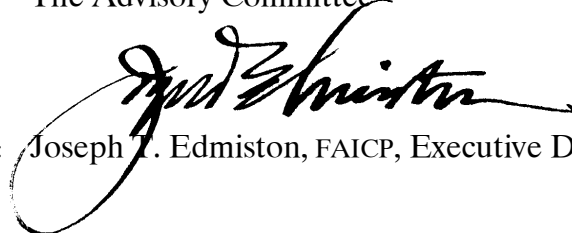


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: February 27, 2006

From :  Joseph L. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 12: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for the acquisition of Zorro's Cabin parcels, approximately 6.1 acres, APN's 648-0-200-101 and 649-0-070-040, Box Canyon area, unincorporated Ventura County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of \$100,000 in Proposition 40 funds to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for the acquisition of Zorro's Cabin parcels, approximately 6.1 acres, APN's 648-0-200-101 and 649-0-070-040, Box Canyon area, unincorporated Ventura County.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204(c) of the Public Resources Codes states, in part:

The conservancy may, in accordance with the priorities of the plan, do the following: . . . (c) Award grants to state agencies, cities, counties, resource conservation districts, and park and recreation districts for the purpose of acquiring sites identified as necessary for park, recreation, or conservation purposes and for development of essential related facilities.

Background: Please see the attached grant application and materials from the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. This Simi Hills property proposed for acquisition, two parcels totaling approximately 6.1 acres, was used for filming location work for the popular 1957-59 Walt Disney television series "Zorro," and includes a studio-built structure; hence the name "Zorro's Cabin." The parcels are included in the Conservancy's Land Acquisition Workprogram for the Simi Hills in the Box Canyon-South Chatsworth Peak designation. The site lies within an extremely important cross-mountain habitat linkage important for wildlife movement. The property is exceptionally scenic, featuring oaks, sandstone outcrops, rare plants such as Santa Susana Tarplant, and seasonal pools within the boulders that may support fairy shrimp. The parcels are not adjacent to public land at this time but are in the vicinity of the Santa Susana State Historic Park and other Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District land. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's Sage Ranch Park lies about a mile to the west. Views from the land to Chatsworth Reservoir and across the San Fernando Valley are spectacular. The site is within the Los Angeles River Watershed.

Agenda Item 12
February 27, 2006
Page 2

The requested grant of \$100,000 from the Conservancy's Proposition 40 funds is to be matched 3:1 by Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District funds (\$150,000 approved by the District Board in December) and \$50,000 from private sources, including the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association. The Conservancy's grant funds would be deposited directly into escrow, and the Park District would take title and be responsible for the property.